

REMARKS

Claims 1-3, 5, 7-9, 11, 13-19, 21-25, and 27-40 are now presented for examination. Claim 15 has been amended to define still more clearly what Applicants regard as their invention, and no change in scope of this claim is either intended or believed to be effected herein. Claims 32-40 have been added to assure Applicants of a full measure of protection of the scope to which they deem themselves entitled. Claims 1, 7, 15, and 21 are independent.

On the continuation sheet to the Advisory Action, the Examiner stated that the claim language "by a space-frequency transformation" and "which is inferior to a predetermined third number" were considered to be new matter not supported by the specification as originally filed. Applicants offer the following remarks in traversal of that view.

With respect to the claim language "by a space-frequency transformation," Applicants submit that a person having ordinary skill in the art would consider the transformation proposed by the specification to be a space-frequency transformation (see, for example, page 5, lines 24-26), in view of the fact that the original data is an image signal (see, e.g., page 5, lines 11-12). This is also clear from the fact that the first blocks relate to the space domain (see, for example, page 9, lines 15-19) and the second blocks are in the frequency domain (e.g., the sub-block of page 9, lines 25-26).

With respect to the claim language "which is inferior to a predetermined third number," Applicants submit that the feature that the second number of samples of any second block is inferior to a predetermined third number is, mathematically speaking, equivalent to the original claim language of the "predetermined third number of samples

which is at least equal to the largest of the second numbers." This is because if the third number is at least equal to the largest of the second numbers, then any of the second numbers will be inferior to the third number; and, conversely, if each second number is inferior to the third number, then even the largest of the second numbers will be inferior to the third number, which in Applicants' view means that the third number will be at least equal to the largest of the second numbers.

Furthermore, in the embodiment taught in the specification, the third number corresponds to the size of the block that the entropic coding and quantization module 26 is able to process (see page 10, lines 1-2).^{1/} As described at page 10, lines 3-5, sub-blocks may, however, have a lower size. The second number of samples may be inferior to the third number of samples. In this case, the blocks are grouped to obtain the third number of samples. The recitation of Claim 1 is therefore exactly in accord with the specification, for instance in the above-cited portions (i.e., page 10, lines 1-5).

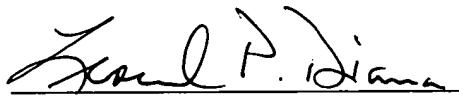
Regarding support for the new claims, Claims 32-40, Applicants offer the following remarks. Claims 32 and 35 are supported at least by page 11, lines 13-14. Claims 33 and 36 are supported at least by page 10, lines 30-32. Claim 34 is supported at least by page 18, lines 6-8. Claim 37 is supported at least by page 8, lines 19-28. Claims 38 is supported at least by page 10, lines 3-5, and page 18, lines 1-2. Claim 39 is supported at least by page 10, lines 6-7. Claim 40 is supported at least by page 9, lines 30-32.

^{1/}It is of course to be understood that the references to various portions of the present application are by way of illustration and example only, and that the claims are not limited by the details shown in the portions referred to.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request favorable consideration and early passage to issue of the present application.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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